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SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION: SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF U.S. INVASION  
OF AFGHANISTAN

¶1. SUMMARY: Editorialists in all major Kabul dailies used the sixth anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan to measure the progress their country has made, and, despite improvements, all found the progress wanting. A resurgent Taliban, government corruption, ineptitude of the Afghan security forces and continued meddling by Afghanistan's neighbors were factors cited in slowing Afghanistan's progress and increasing instability. END SUMMARY.

¶2. An unsigned editorial in the Oct. 8 edition of The Daily Afghanistan, an independent daily, read: "In the last six years, the transition in the country has been an exceptional and outstanding achievement. What is more important than these achievements is ability to maintain them, which is the responsibility of Afghanistan and of the international community. But after the presence of almost 40,000 foreign troops over the last six years, Afghanistan is still under threat of terrorists, which is a mystery that needs to be solved.

"After six years, people were expecting to achieve peace, development, prosperity and some significant changes in the areas of the economy, reconstruction, security and national and international relations. Unfortunately, it seems like Afghanistan is slowly moving towards those dark days that we had experienced six years ago."

¶3. An unsigned editorial in the Oct. 8 edition of Cheragh, an independent daily, read: "The presence of the U.S.-led Coalition Forces in Afghanistan is entering the seventh year. While the people of Afghanistan are still expecting peace and security, terrorist camps are not shattered, but expanded. Drug production and trafficking is not prevented, but increased beyond the limits, and poverty and corruption in government offices remain untold stories during the presence of foreign forces in Afghanistan."

¶4. An unsigned editorial in Anis, an independent daily, on Oct. 8, read: "The international community mistakenly thought that the Taliban disappeared from the scene after collapse the collapse of their regime. Nevertheless, they have been waiting in their former hideouts looking for an appropriate time to reappear, and the international community and the Afghan government's weakness and lack of decisiveness has now paved the way for them to arise and become the biggest obstacle.

"The United States has made decisions about Afghanistan based on Pakistan's advice, and has judged Afghanistan from Pakistan's prospective, but has never thought of eliminating the roots of terrorism existing in that country. Now the remainders of the terrorists and the Taliban are gathering with the support of neighboring countries and they are directly interfering in Afghanistan, and their only aim is the collapse of the government. People are losing the hope for a safe and bright future day by day. The international community, especially the United States, should prove their promises of commitments towards Afghanistan by eliminating these obstacles preventing Afghans from stepping out on the road towards peace, stability and prosperity, and those promises should not fade away day by day."

15. An unsigned editorial in the Oct. 8, edition of Weesa, an independent daily, read: "There is no question that today Afghanistan cannot be compared with the last six years, and politically, Afghanistan has a place in every political organization and international conference in the world. Afghanistan was not like today six years back. Today, we have an elected President, a government and a parliament, and our country is optimistic about its future."

"In the construction area, a considerable amount of work has been achieved but above all, our nation's hopes and our people's optimism never came true. If the six years presence of the international community in Afghanistan was effective, we would have never seen in Kabul city in one week, three suicide bomb blasts that made tens of homes mourn. Now, it is important to do what has not been done yet, and to not do what causes Afghanistan and the international community many losses."

16. An unsigned editorial in the Oct. 8 edition of Islah independent

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daily read, "Six years after the Taliban regime's collapse, we now hear that they are back in action with the support of neighboring countries. The lack of coordination between Afghan security forces and NATO, and slow training of the Ministry of Interior and Defense are also considered factors which are facilitating opportunities for the Taliban to grow stronger. If the international community can eliminate the foreign supporters of the Taliban and al-Qaeda network, and in the meantime the ANA (Afghan National Army) and ANP (Afghan National Police) become capable of combat with these groups, then we can expect some positive outcomes during the seventh year of U.S. invasion on Afghanistan."

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